

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030

SECOND EDITION



Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL



Adelaide Hills Council acknowledges that we undertake our business on the traditional Country of the Peramangk and Kaurna peoples.

We pay our respect to Ancestors and Elders past and present as the Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land, for they hold the memories, traditions, spiritual relationships, culture and hopes of the First Nations of Australia.

We are committed to working together to ensure that Peramangk and Kaurna culture and traditions are sustained, valued and continuing.

Together we will care for Country for the generations to come and in this context the decisions we make should be guided by the principle that nothing we do should decrease our children's ability to live on this land.

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As Mayor of Adelaide Hills Council, I am pleased to present our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030.

This plan reflects our ongoing commitment to building a community where everyone belongs and where barriers to inclusion in community life are removed.

Inclusion is a part of everyday life in the Adelaide Hills. It benefits everyone – including people with disability, of all ages, cultures, identities and experiences. As a council, we will show leadership, model inclusive practice, and work towards making sure our services, facilities and information are accessible to all.

Our inaugural DAIP resulted in meaningful progress in improving access and inclusion for our Hills community. Examples of this include:

A new changing places facility at Fabrik in Lobethal, new communication boards at Sherry Park Mylor and Protea Reserve Crafers, disability awareness training for staff and inclusion of people with lived experience of disability in community engagement and advisory roles.

This next Plan sets clear, practical actions. It focuses on continuing to remove barriers, designing for inclusion from the start, and partnering with our community – especially people with lived experience – so that everyone can belong, participate and thrive.

On behalf of Council, thank you to everyone who has contributed to past initiatives and to the development of this Plan.

The DAIP will be published on our website: www.ahc.sa.gov.au.

If you need this document in another format, such as an Easy Read or a fully accessible Word version, please contact Council's Community Development team on **(08) 8408 0400** or email: mail@ahc.sa.gov.au.





Vision

An Adelaide Hills where everyone belongs, can participate fully, and can access and enjoy our places, services and community life.

Aspiration

Disability is a natural and valued part of human diversity in our community.

People with disability are not a single group. Experiences, identities and strengths are diverse.

We will strive to remove barriers before they exclude, and design our towns, landscapes, services and events so that people of all abilities can live, connect and thrive.

We will listen to lived experience, especially from priority groups, and include those voices in planning, design and delivery.

By designing inclusively, working in partnership, and being flexible, we will increase participation and create a community where everyone belongs.

About this Plan

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The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2026 – 2030) sets out how Adelaide Hills Council will work with people with disability, carers, families, businesses, the wider community and our staff to remove barriers and create more inclusive places, services and opportunities across the Hills.

To ensure a high standard of implementation, our approach is strength-based and integrated:

People with disability contribute skills, leadership and perspectives across all areas of community life.

We focus on universal design — designing environments so they can be used by as many people as possible without needing adaptation.

We design for belonging and participation, so people can take part in ways that reflect their strengths, identities and choices.

Autism Inclusion

The DAIP recognises autism as part of disability diversity. Actions consider sensory, communication and participation needs across environments, services and engagement activities.

Why this Plan Matters

For community members: It helps make public places easier to move around, information easier to understand, events more welcoming, and services easier to use.

For families and carers: It reduces everyday barriers and supports inclusion in community life.

For local businesses and community groups: It provides guidance and partnerships to improve accessibility and attract more customers and participants.

For Council: It aligns our work with South Australian law and national strategies and turns our values into clear actions and measurable outcomes.

Our Region

Adelaide Hills Council works on Peramangk and Kurna Country. Our district spans 795 km², located 10–40 km from the Adelaide CBD, across 57 townships/localities and 16,267 households, with an estimated population of 42,368.

Our area includes the hills face from Rostrevor and Teringie up to Kersbrook and Gumeracha in the north, west to Woodside and Oakbank, and south to Scott Creek and Mylor.

Council facilities include offices in Stirling and Woodside, a Resource Recovery Centre in Heathfield, the Fabrik Arts and Heritage Hub in Lobethal, 16 historic cemeteries, libraries, service centres and community centres in Stirling, Woodside, Gumeracha and Norton Summit. We also support The Hut Community Centre (Aldgate) and the Adelaide Hills Swimming Centre (Woodside). These places support connection, participation and belonging.



Our People

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According to the 2021 Census, 1,540 people (3.8%) in the Adelaide Hills reported needing help with core activities due to disability. This provides insight into residents with higher support needs but does not capture all disability. Many people with disability do not need daily assistance yet still face barriers. This is why Council plans for inclusion using universal design to benefit everyone.



Our Workforce and Volunteers

Council is an equal opportunity employer with around 193 employees across a range of roles (administration, field crews, management, community development, property, biodiversity and more). We also have an average of 157 volunteers each year supporting the community.

We are building an inclusive workplace. We have a Reasonable Adjustment Policy and Procedures (adopted October 2018).

This DAIP meets our obligations under South Australian law and aligns our work with state and national strategies.

Legislative and Policy Alignment

- Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (SA): requires all councils to prepare and implement a DAIP.
- State Disability Inclusion Plan 2025 - 2029: our actions align to its domains:
 1. Inclusive environments and communities
 2. Education and employment
 3. Personal and community support
 4. Health and wellbeing*
 5. Safety, rights and justice

*NB The Health and Wellbeing Domain is not identified as the responsibility of Council and will be addressed by other state authorities.

State Disability Inclusion Plan 2025 - 2029, addressing the needs of priority groups:

- Aboriginal peoples with disability
 - People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds with disability
 - Women with disability
 - Children with disability
 - People with disability who identify as LGBTIQ+
 - People with significant intellectual disability or who have high levels of vulnerability due to disability
 - People with disability who live in regional communities.
- Australia's Disability Strategy 2021 - 2031 and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities guide our commitment to human rights, participation and inclusion.
 - SA Autism Strategy (launched June 2024): provides a five - year roadmap to improve the lives of Autistic people and their families and works alongside the State Disability Inclusion Plan.

Alignment to Council's Strategies and Plans

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The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) works alongside many other Council plans. It is not a separate or standalone document — it fits within Council's broader strategic direction and supports the goals already set for our community.

Council's Strategic Plan sets the overall vision for how we want the Adelaide Hills to grow, connect and thrive. The DAIP supports this vision by ensuring that access and inclusion are built into the way we design places, plan services and make decisions.

The DAIP also aligns with a number of more detailed Council plans — such as those for infrastructure, community services, libraries, youth, recreation and local economic development. These plans guide how we deliver specific projects and services. The DAIP ensures that inclusion is considered across all of them, so accessibility isn't an afterthought but part of everyday practice.

The DAIP strengthens the work Council is already doing. It connects with existing strategies, guides future planning, and ensures that access and inclusion are at the heart of our long-term vision for the community.

Why this Matters to Residents

- Aligning our DAIP with state and national priorities helps us:
- Work together for collective impact
- Use shared indicators and data sources to measure progress
- Target actions that make a real difference locally.

What is Disability

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Plain English Definition

Disability is when a person has a condition that makes it harder to do everyday activities or take part in community life.

It may affect how a person moves, sees, hears, thinks, learns, communicates or interacts.

Often, the main barriers are inaccessible places, information or attitudes — not the person.

Legal Context (South Australia)

Under the Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (SA), disability includes cognitive, neurological or sensory impairments (or a combination). When these interact with barriers, they can hinder a person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Adelaide Hills Council is committed to removing barriers so everyone can participate.



How We Engaged

- Internal meetings: more than 13 meetings across Council departments to identify opportunities and improvements.
- Community Forum: held on 27 November 2025 at The Village Well focused on access and inclusion.
- Drop-in sessions: in Stirling Library, Gumeracha Library, and Fabrik Christmas Market to gather local insights across the region.
- Online Engagement: Community Engagement Portal
- Targeted conversations: with disability services, peak organisations, AHC Access and Inclusion Advisors, and residents who requested a 1:1 discussion.
- Inclusion of priority groups: including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, young people, parents and carers, and LGBTIQ+ people.
- Experts in disability inclusion supported the process, most with lived experience.

What We Heard (Common Themes)

- Improve footpath accessibility, especially in main streets and around schools.
- Involve lived experience throughout the life of the Plan (co-design, testing, feedback).
- Increase accessible parking.
- Support local businesses to improve accessibility.
- Share accessible features of Council facilities online.
- Introduce the Sunflower Lanyard to support accessible events and services.
- Raise community awareness about access needs and inclusive attitudes.
- Embed universal design in planning and projects.
- Strengthen employment pathways and opportunities.

We sincerely thank everyone who contributed their time, experience and ideas.

Highlights from the previous Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2020-2024)

Over the life of the 2020-2024 DAIP, Adelaide Hills Council delivered, or was in the progress of delivering, almost 90% of the 39 endorsed actions.

Key achievements included:

- A new changing places facility at Fabrik Arts + Heritage Hall in Lobethal
- New communication boards at Sheer Park Mylor and Protea Reserve Crafrers
- We have 26 accessible carparks which include 3 new ones located in Federation Park, Sherry Park and Mylor Tennis Club plus upgrading the disability carpark at The Summit Community Centre
- Disability awareness training for staff.
- Inclusion of people with disability in community engagement and advisory roles.
- Stronger partnerships with local disability service providers, including NDIS.

These achievements reflect Council's dedication to providing a strong foundation for the 2026-2030 Plan.



STATE Domain, Priority Area and Outcome	AHC Action to support the State's Priority Areas and Outcomes	AHC 4-year measure of success	STATE Mandatory Measures	AHC Timeframe	AHC Responsibility
Domain 1: Inclusive environments and communities					
Priority Area A: Active Participation					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are active participants in accessible and inclusive communities.	1A.1 Explore ways to make it easier for people with disability to access information about, register for and attend council-run events and programs.	The needs of people with disability are consistently embedded in event and program planning and delivery across council.	1.1.2	An initial period of 6 months to set up anything new then business as usual	Region & Place, Community Centres, FABRIK, Libraries, Comms, Engagement & Events, Positive Ageing
	1A.2 Expand opportunities for people with disability to participate in arts and culture programs, exhibitions and performances at council-run venues, programs and events, where possible.	A variety of accessible arts and culture opportunities are available to people across council-run facilities and events to participate in.	1.1.2	Ongoing	Community Centres, Libraries, FABRIK, Community Development, Comms Engagement & Events
	1A.3 Through event and program planning we will give consideration to identifying and designating quiet/low-sensory spaces or times, and if available, communicate this in promotions.	Community members have low sensory times/spaces available to access events and programs where and when available.	1.3.2 (a)	End of 2026 then business as usual	Community Centres, Libraries, FABRIK, Region & Place, Comms Engagement & Events

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AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are active participants in accessible and inclusive communities.	1A.4 Encourage and support community groups, local sporting clubs, community-run events and program providers to co-design and deliver accessible and inclusive programs and events.	Community groups have access to information to be able to offer accessible and inclusive initiatives.	1.1.2	Ongoing in response to community need	Sport & Recreation, Community Centres, Region & Place, Community Development
	1A.5 Offer accessible exercise programs as part of community centre programs that encourage movement, inclusion and wellbeing as part of a preventative health strategy.	People with disability or people with mobility impairment can access exercise classes for strength, movement and wellbeing.	1.2.1(b)	Ongoing	Community Centres
Priority Area B: Inclusive Communities and Attitudes					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are respected and included in their communities, where inclusive attitudes and behaviours are widely demonstrated.	1B.1 Build confidence, knowledge and skills of Council leadership, Elected Members, staff and volunteers to integrate inclusive practice into their work through disability awareness training, including mandatory training for roles that directly engage with people with disability.	Leadership, Elected Members, staff and volunteers are able to offer meaningful engagement with people with lived experience.	1.2.1 (a)	At induction for volunteers, when onboarding staff and Elected Members, and when updating of training is needed	People & Culture, Volunteering, Governance, Fabrik

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AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are respected and included in their communities, where inclusive attitudes and behaviours are widely demonstrated.	1B.2 Explore how to improve understanding of Universal Design within targeted council teams and for project managers who design buildings, infrastructure and communications.	Council staff involved in design work are trained in and are applying Universal Design principles.	1.3.2 (b)	Ongoing	Civil Services, Property, CEE, Region & Place, Development Services, (People & Culture as support)
	1B.3 Draw on lived-experience and professional guidance to shape access and inclusion initiatives – including from priority groups where possible.	Council is receiving and implementing lived experience feedback and expert guidance to inform the design of access and inclusion across a number of initiatives.	1.2.3	New initiatives or projects	Inclusion & Wellbeing, Community Development, Comms Engagement & Events
Priority Area C: Universal Design					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: Everyone in South Australia can access and enjoy inclusive and accessible natural and built environments.	1C.1 Embed universal design and accessibility requirements into all new, and where feasible, upgraded Council facilities, so they are usable and welcoming for the widest range and diversity of people.	Universal Design is routinely prioritised in new and renewed council buildings and fit-outs, meeting council's obligations under the Discrimination Inclusion Act 2018 and the State Disability Inclusion Plan 2025-2029.	1.3.2 (b)	Ongoing	Assets, Sport & Rec, Region & Place, Civil Services, Property, Open Space
	1C.2 Consider opportunities for accessible sport, physical activity and recreation across open spaces, trails, parks, reserves and playgrounds.	There's 'something for everyone' across council's open space infrastructure and playgrounds.	1.3.3	Ongoing	Sport & Recreation, Assets, Civil, Open Space

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AHC will support the STATE Outcome: Everyone in South Australia can access and enjoy inclusive and accessible natural and built environments.	1C.3 Apply solutions that address Universal Design and accessibility requirements whenever practical when installing, renewing, or maintaining infrastructure (including council footpaths, crossings and roads).	Universal Design solutions are routinely considered in infrastructure installation, renewal and maintenance.	1.3.2 (a), 1.3.2 (b), 1.3.3	Ongoing	Assets, Civil Services
	1C.4 Make it easier for council to identify where accessibility improvements are needed across facilities, infrastructure and services.	Council uses data from community complaints, lived experience and accessibility audits to help prioritise accessibility improvements across facilities and services.	1.3.2 (a)	Ongoing	Assets, CEE, Region & Place, Customer Service, Rangers, IT, Community Development
	1C.5 Encourage and support local businesses to enhance inclusion and accessibility through voluntary recognition, incentives, and guidance.	An increase in number local businesses that have become more accessible, and community members say they find it easier to shop and use local services.	1.2.1 (a), 1.2.1 (b)	12 months to initiate then ongoing	Region & Place
	1C.6 Showcase Fabrik as a model for making heritage places inclusive for everyone.	More heritage facilities improved for accessibility, with Fabrik demonstrating what successful upgrades look like.	1.3.2 (a)		Fabrik, Comms Engagement & Events

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AHC will support the STATE Outcome: Everyone in South Australia can access and enjoy inclusive and accessible natural and built environments.	1C.7 Explore a plan to improve the supply, placement and usability of accessible parking (and lighting) across Council facilities and town centres.	People can find and use accessible parking more easily, including at night.	1.3.2 (a)	December, 2026	Assets, Region & Place
Priority Area D: Accessible Facilities					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability can access public toilets that meet their needs when out in the community.	1D.1 Review the minimum accessibility standards for toilets in open spaces to ensure both the facility and fixtures are useable and fit for purpose for the broadest range and diversity of people.	The useability of toilet facilities by people with a wide range of accessibility needs is prioritised in council's new builds, refurbishments and open spaces.	1.4.1	Ongoing	Assets, Sport & Rec, Property
Priority Area E: Communications and Information					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability can find the information they need in the format(s) they need.	1E.1 Continue to explore ways to make it easier to find and navigate information about council's disability and inclusion initiatives, access and understand Council information and communicate with Council.	Council provides high quality communication and online experience that meets or exceeds accessibility standards and is applied consistently across the organisation and in response to community need.	1.5.1	A & I webpage updates December, 2026 - Website update 2027	CEE, Customer Service, Inclusion & Wellbeing
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AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability can find the information they need in the format(s) they need.	1E.2 Aim to provide clear program and event information - including venue accessibility features and active transport or public transport options, where available, in a range of accessible formats.	Information is available in a variety of formats to support people to register for, plan for and get to council-run facilities, programs and events.	1.5.1	Ongoing and in response to facility upgrades	Community Centres, Libraries, FABRIK, Region & Place, Comms Engagement & Events, Inclusion & Wellbeing
	1E.3 Aim to improve how people move around the community through clearer, more accessible and reliable wayfinding and facility information.	People with disability can navigate community hubs more easily.	1.5.1	Ongoing	Comms Engagement & Events, Region & Place, Sport & Rec, Open Space, Inclusion & Wellbeing
Priority Area F: Transportation					
NA - not an identified priority for local government, being addressed by other state authorities.	1F.1 Seek opportunities to advocate to governments and transport providers for more accessible and connected transport services to key employment hubs in our district.	Council makes use of opportunities to advocate on behalf of the AHC community.	NA	When opportunity allows	Inclusion & Wellbeing
Priority Area G: Collaboration, consultation and innovation					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are actively involved in government decisions that affect their lives.	1G.1 Provide opportunities for people with disability to actively shape access and inclusion in the Adelaide Hills Council.	Council maintains a Disability Inclusion Network with flexible participation options.	1.7.2	Ongoing	Inclusion & Wellbeing

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AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are actively involved in government decisions that affect their lives.	1G.2 Make it easier for people with disability to participate in council's community engagement activities.	Staff are supported to deliver engagements that are more accessible and inclusive of people with disability.	1.7.1	Ongoing	Comms Engagement & Events
Domain 2: Education and Employment					
Priority Area A: Targeted Transitional Supports					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: people with disability have supportive environments to learn, grow, and transition throughout their life.	2A.1 Continue to offer meaningful & flexible volunteering opportunities that welcome and support people with a wide range of strengths and abilities where the role allows it.	People with disability report a positive volunteer experience at council.	2.3.5	Ongoing	Volunteering, Libraries, Volunteer Leaders, Fabrik
Priority Area B: Access to Employment Opportunities					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability have opportunities to achieve, develop and success in their chosen fields.	2B.1 Explore how to support initiatives and programs that build the work skills of people with disability and improve their pathways to employment, including linking with local inclusive employment services.	A number of programs and initiatives that help pathways to employment for people with disability, including linking with local inclusive employment services, are identified and shared with the community.	2.4.3	2030	People & Culture, Community Wellbeing
	2B.2 Explore ways to embed disability inclusion into the Recruitment and Retention Strategy so that job descriptions, applications and interview formats reflect inclusive employment practices.	People with disability apply for Council roles - where appropriate.	2.4.3	2030	People & Culture

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AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability have opportunities to achieve, develop and success in their chosen fields.	2B.3 Support local businesses to understand the benefits of employing people with disability.	Local businesses have access to opportunities to broaden their understanding of the benefits of employing people with disability.	3.1.1		
Priority Area C: Inclusive Working Environments					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability have access to supportive places to earn.	2C.1 Continue building a workplace culture that is fair, welcoming and inclusive of all people, including people with disability and aligns with the Recruitment and Retention Strategy.	Council staff experience the workplace as inclusive and welcoming, and council meets its related legislative requirements.	2.5.1	2027 then ongoing	People & Culture
Domain 3: Personal and Community Support					
Priority Area A: Accessibility					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability can easily access community supports and services.	3A.1 Explore opportunities to help community members find and connect with disability, health and wellbeing services through council facilities and events.	Council maintains partnerships that help link people with disability to health and wellbeing information and services.	3.1.1	Ongoing	Inclusion & Wellbeing, Community Centres, Libraries, Comms Engagement & Events
Priority Area B: Information Sharing					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability receive more coordinated and effective support when services work together and share information.	3B.1 Actively contribute to and participate in Local Government Access Inclusion Network and Inclusive SA Communities of Practice meetings to stay abreast of developments that support the delivery of the DAIP.	Council contributes to and stays informed of the sector and state developments in disability access and inclusion.	3.3.1	Ongoing	Inclusion & Wellbeing

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AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability receive more coordinated and effective support when services work together and share information.	3B.2 Maintain awareness of service providers and relevant networks to ensure community are aware of services.	Council stays abreast of services in the area and maintains networks with relevant service providers in the area to identify shared priorities and service gaps.	3.1.1	Ongoing	Inclusion & Wellbeing Community Centres
Priority Area C: Programs					
AHC will support the State Outcome: Government-funded programs and services include disability-specific provisions to enable full and equal participation.	3C.1 Promote grant opportunities to increase applications and consider funding levels in response to demonstrated community demand for accessible and inclusive projects and events.	Council receives applications for grants for accessibility and inclusion projects and events.	3.5.1	Ongoing	Region & Place (Grants and Events)
	3C.2 Continue to embed into existing programs opportunities that support residents with disability to connect with others, and discover and participate in inclusive activities that are welcoming and accessible for people of all ages, abilities, cultures and identities.	People with disability report improved connection and inclusion after attending a council event or program.	1.2.3	Ongoing	Community Centres, Libraries, FABRIK, Community Development
Domain 4: Health and Wellbeing	IS NOT IDENTIFIED AS A PRIORITY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT - BEING ADDRESSED BY OTHER STATE AUTHORITIES				

STATE Domain, Priority Area and Outcome	AHC Action to support the State's Priority Areas and Outcomes	AHC 4-year measure of success	STATE Mandatory Measures	AHC Timeframe	AHC Responsibility
Domain 5: Safety, Rights and Justice					
Priority Area A: Responding to Emergencies					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are kept safe during emergencies with their needs planned for and prioritised.	5A.1 Continue to support appropriate community-led readiness initiatives through council's community resilience role - noting that community are responsible for their own safety during an emergency.	People with disability are considered in council's emergency preparedness and response.	5.2.1	Ongoing	Community Resilience
	5A.2 Council will continue to promote the importance for all community members to keep themselves safe during an emergency by offering information regarding preparation and planning that is of particular relevance to people with disability.	People with disability will have access to information on keeping themselves safe during an emergency.	5.2.1	Ongoing	Community Resilience

Our Roles

Depending on the action, Council may act as a connector, responder, partner, facilitator, advocate, funder or regulator.

Monitoring and Reporting

We will track progress and report.

- **Governance:** Assign clear owners for each action and involve input from community members with lived experience.
- **Measures:** Use practical indicators aligned to State Plan domains (e.g., number of accessible upgrades, training completions, accessibility features published, participation rates etc).
- **Reporting:** Provide annual updates to DHS and Council.
- **Review:** Conduct a mid-term review and a final evaluation to identify outcomes and next steps.
- **Continuous improvement:** Use community feedback, co-design and ongoing engagement with Access and Inclusion Champions to refine actions over time.



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mail@ahc.sa.gov.au

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